

CHAPTER 2: OBTAINING A SCHOOL PUPIL TRANSPORT VEHICLE (7D) LICENSE

7D Driver Licenses: A special license is required by M.G.L. c.90, Sec. 8A 1/2 to operate a 7D vehicle. An applicant for a 7D license must be at least 21 years of age and have had a driver's license for three (3) continuous years. The applicant must pass a CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) check, be of good moral character, pass an eye exam, a physical exam and a written knowledge exam.

Note: Operators who hold an active school bus license issued by the Department of Telecommunications and Energy (DTE) may operate a 7D vehicle without a 7D license.

An applicant is *ineligible* if he or she has been convicted of rape, unnatural acts, sodomy, or the use, sale, manufacture, possession with intent to distribute or trafficking of any controlled substance listed under M.G.L. c. 94C, Sec 31, or if convicted of operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of intoxicating liquor, or of marijuana, narcotic drugs, depressants or stimulant substances, as defined in M.G.L. c. 94C, Sec 1 or the vapors of glue within the preceding five year period under the provisions of Sec. 24. The RMV may deny a 7D license to a person who has a driving history that demonstrates an inability to safely and responsibly transport school pupils. A 7D license is valid for one (1) year from the date of issuance. A 7D operator must carry such a license on his/her person at all times while operating a 7D vehicle and must be able to provide such license when requested by either law enforcement or RMV personnel.

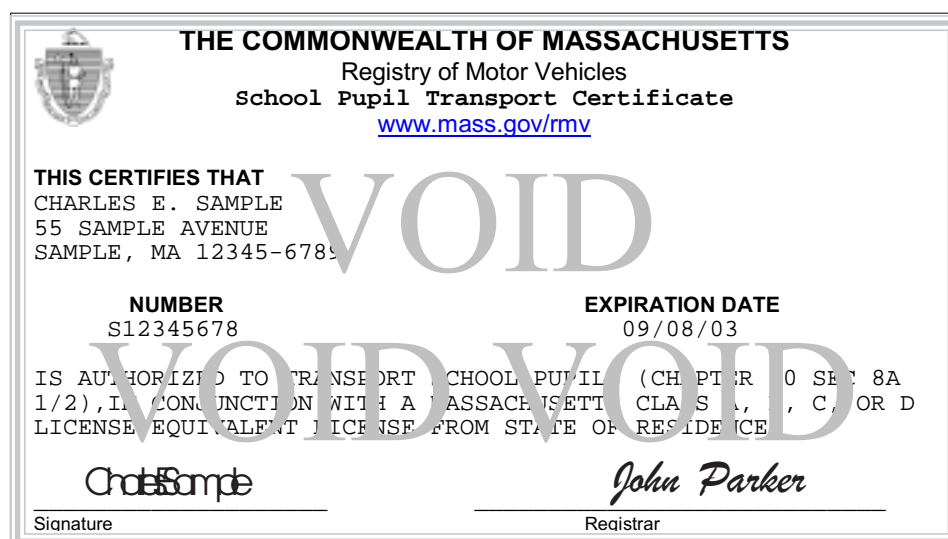


Figure 2: Sample of 7D School Pupil Transport License

Initial 7D Application Procedure

1. Obtain a 7D School Pupil Transport Application. This application may be obtained by:
 - a. Downloading a copy from the RMV Website at: www.mass.gov/rmv
 - b. Photo-copying the application shown on the first three pages of Appendix B.
 - c. Calling the RMV Phone Center at (617) 351-4500 (from the 339 / 617 / 781 / 857 area codes) or 800-858-3926 (from all other MA area codes)
 - d. Going to any RMV full service branch location or License Express locationYou must fully complete all information required on the 7D application. The completed application must be signed and dated. Incomplete or unsigned applications will be returned to you.

2. Get a physical examination. The medical certificate on the 7D application must be completed and certified by a licensed physician. A medical evaluation is valid for 90 days only. A new physical will be required if the examination is older than 90 days. The medical certificate must include a doctor's signature and registration number, or the application will be returned to you. Applications signed by a nurse practitioner will not be accepted.

Note: Applicants who have passed their seventieth birthday and are mentally and physically capable of operating a motor vehicle transporting school pupils shall twice annually be examined by a physician to determine such capability.

3. If you are not a Massachusetts resident or have moved into the state recently, you must obtain a certified criminal record check as well as a certified driving record from your current or former home state. These documents must be no more than 30 days old and must be submitted with your initial application. Only original documents will be accepted.
In addition, an out of state applicant must provide a certified criminal record check and certified driving record annually.
4. Bring your completed application and any supporting documents to any RMV full service branch to take your 7D written test. You will be required to pay a \$15 exam fee before beginning the test. To prepare for the 7D written test, study this manual along with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Driver's Manual. A Massachusetts Driver's Manual may be downloaded from the RMV's Website at mass.gov/RMV or picked-up at any RMV branch location.
5. Once you have passed the written test, in order to process your application you must present an additional non-refundable \$15 license fee by check or money order (made out to the Registry of Motor Vehicles). Your application and \$15 license fee will be forwarded to the RMV's Vehicle Safety & Compliance Services section for final approval. All applicants are subject to a criminal record check and a driving record check.
6. If your 7D application is approved, your license will be mailed directly to you. All 7D licenses are valid for one year from the date of issue.
7. If you let your 7D license expire, you have up to four years to renew it from the date of expiration. If your 7D license lapses more than four years, you will be required to once again complete all steps of the initial 7D licensing process listed on this page.

Renewing A 7D License

School pupil transport licenses are valid for one year from the date of issue. When the time to renew your 7D license approaches, the Registry of Motor Vehicles may mail you a renewal notice and an application although it is your responsibility to be aware of your license expiration date.

Important: You may not receive notification if an incorrect mailing address is recorded with the RMV. Whenever you move, you are required to notify the Registry of Motor Vehicles within 30 days. To change or confirm your new address, call the RMV Phone Center at: (617) 351-4500 (from the 339 / 617 / 781 / 857 area codes) or 800-858-3926 (from all other MA area codes).

1. You must complete all information required on the 7D application. The completed application must be signed and dated. Incomplete applications will be returned to you.
2. Get a physical examination. The medical certificate on the 7D application must be completed and certified by a licensed physician. A medical evaluation is valid for 90 days only. A new physical is required if the examination is older than 90 days. The medical certificate must include the doctor's signature and registration number or your application will be returned to you. Applications signed by a nurse practitioner will not be accepted.
3. If you are not a Massachusetts resident or have moved into the state recently, you must obtain a certified criminal record check as well as a certified driving record from your current or former home state. These documents must be no more than 30 days old and must be submitted with your application. Only original documents will be accepted.
In addition, an out of state applicant must provide a certified criminal record check and certified driving record annually.
4. Mail your completed application accompanied by a non-refundable \$15.00 license fee in the form of a check or money order (payable to the Registry of Motor Vehicles) directly to:

Registry of Motor Vehicles
Vehicle Safety & Compliance Services.
Attn: 7D Licensing
P.O. Box 199109
Boston, MA 02119-9109

5. All applicants are subject to a criminal record check and a driving record check. After the RMV approves your 7D application for renewal, your 7D license will be mailed directly to you within ten (10) business days.

7D Operator Responsibilities

Pre-trip inspection: All 7D operators are required to complete a daily pre-trip inspection of the vehicle to ensure safe operation.

Pre-trip reports must be recorded and a copy must be present with the operator during daily operation. Operators should immediately notify company officials of any defects.

Operators must check that the following required equipment and vehicle components are present and in proper working order.

1. Tires
2. Lighting Devices
 - a. Headlights (upper and lower beams)
 - b. Directionals (front and rear)
 - c. Stop lights
 - d. Reverse lights
 - e. Four-way flashers
 - f. School Bus Lights
3. Brakes
 - a. Service
 - b. Parking
4. Mirrors
5. Exhaust
6. Fluid Leaks
7. Doors
8. Windshield wipers
9. Horn
10. Interior of Vehicle
 - a. Seatbelts (Safety Belts)
 - b. Child Seats/Booster Seats (if necessary)
 - c. Door Warning Device
 - d. Clean Interior
 - e. Heater & Defroster
11. Current registration
12. Front & rear pupil plates
13. Current inspection stickers
 - a. Annual state inspection sticker
 - b. Semi-annual 7D inspection sticker
14. Safety Equipment
 - a. 2 chock blocks
 - b. First aid kit
 - c. Fire extinguisher (properly charged)
 - d. 3 flares or safety triangles

Note: A business may create pre-trip inspection forms to suit the needs and policy of the business. The form must provide a means to check off all items that must be inspected. There must be a place on the form so that the operator can sign and date the daily inspection.

While Transporting Pupils

You must conform to the following rules regarding transport of pupils:

- The School Bus sign must be in the upright position.
- Drivers are prohibited from: smoking, consuming alcoholic beverages, refueling, using a cellphone, or any other activity that may interfere with the safe operation of the vehicle. Operators are required to wear a safety belt at all times during vehicle operation. Doors should be firmly closed and locked when transporting school pupils.
- Drivers should assist pupils who require assistance when entering and exiting the vehicle. All passengers must be properly restrained as set forth in 540 CMR 7AA (see Appendix A).
- The driver must not leave the vehicle unattended while pupils are in the vehicle. This does not apply when a driver leaves the vehicle to assist pupils in entering and exiting the vehicle.
- Only the driver may occupy the driver's seat.

Approaching, Boarding, Seating, & Unloading Pupils

Your responsibility to a pupil starts some distance from a stop. Approach a designated pick-up area with extreme care.

- While passengers board or exit your vehicle, school bus warning lights must flash continuously.
- Direct or assist pupils immediately to their seats.
- Before deactivating school bus warning lights, make sure all passengers are safely seated and properly restrained. M.G.L. c. 90, Sec. 13A requires that both the driver and passengers wear safety belts in school pupil transport vehicles. For children under 12, the requirements of the child passenger restraint law, M.G.L. c. 90, Sec. 7AA apply.
- You are expected to maintain order. If a pupil presents a disciplinary problem, the pupil should be reported to the appropriate authorities according to procedures established by your employer.
- When unloading pupils, you are responsible for their safety as they cross the road. Always make sure pupils cross in front of the vehicle.
- If you must leave the vehicle to assist a pupil, first secure the emergency brake, shut off the engine, and remove the ignition key.
- Operator's must perform a post-trip inspection. Be sure to check for any pupils left on the vehicle.

